

## Message Text

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SUBJECT: STATUS OF U.S. MEDIA CORRESPONDENTS IN INDIA

REF: THE HAGUE 1199

BEGIN SUMMARY: U.S. MEDIA ARE REPRESENTED BY TEN CORRESPONDENTS IN INDIA. FOUR AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN EXPELLED SO FAR. THERE ARE VERY SERIOUS RESTRICTIONS ON THE FREEDOM OF REPORTING BY FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. U.S. MEDIA REPRESENTED NOW IN INDIA: MYRON BELKIND, PAUL CHUTKOW (AP); JOHN F. NEEDHAM (UPI); ALAN BRADFORD (ABC); ERNEST WEATHERALL (NBC); WILLIAM BORDERS, KASTURI RANGAN (INDIAN NATIONAL) (NEW YORK TIMES); WILLIAM E. SMITH, JAMES SHEPHERD (INDIAN NATIONAL) (TIME); PRAN SABHARWAL (INDIAN NATIONAL), (BALTIMORE SUN).

2. U.S. CORRESPONDENTS EXPELLED: LEWIS M. SIMONS (WASHINGTON POST); LOREN JENKINS (NEWSWEEK); EDWARD CODY (AP); JACQUES LESLIE (LOS ANGELES TIMES).

(A) SIMONS WAS THE FIRST IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY. WHEN THE WASHINGTON POST REFUSED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITHDRAW HIM HE WAS EXPELLED FOR REPORTING THE "SHARP RESENTMENT" IN THE INDIAN ARMY, WHERE OFFICERS WERE KNOWN TO BE "ANNOYED" OVER PM GANDHI'S REFUSAL TO RESIGN AFTER BEING FOUND GUILTY BY THE ALLAHABAD HIGH COURT. HIS DISPATCHES ON MRS. GANDHI'S ASSUMING "DICTORIAL RULE" AND THE "SWEEP OF OPPOSITION ARRESTS" WERE ALSO CITED.

(B) JENKINS, SENT TO INDIA IN JULY, FILED HIS STORIES EACH WEEK BY GOING TO EITHER BEIRUT OR BANGKOK. HIS PROVOCATIVE PIECES GOT UP THE GOI'S DANDER AND THEY EXPELLED HIM WHEN HE REFUSED TO SIGN THE CENSORSHIP UNDERTAKING.

(C) CODY WAS EXPELLED (ALSO AFTER REFUSAL OF EMPLOYERS TO WITHDRAW HIM) FOR WHAT THE GOVERNMENT TERMED "REPEATED" VIOLATIONS OF THE CENSORSHIP GUIDELINES. PROBABLY, HE WAS KICKED OUT FOR CITING OPPOSITION LEADERS AND QUOTING "DIPLOMATIC SOURCES."

(D) LESLIE WENT FOR DISOBEYING REPEATED WARNINGS GIVEN BY THE CENSOR.

3. OTHERS: (A) JAMES MILLER (VOA) WITHDRAWN BECAUSE STATUS AS USG EMPLOYEE PREVENTED HIM FROM SIGNING CENSORSHIP GUIDELINES.

(B) DAN SOUTHERLAND'S (CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR) EXPULSION ORDER WAS REVOKED AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR WHEN HE SIGNED UNDERTAKING, AND THEORETICALLY COULD RETURN LATER TO INDIA. THE GOI, IT SHOULD BE NOTED, REFUSED TO GRANT HIM A VISA THIS JANUARY.

(C) R. RAMANUJAM (INDIAN NATIONAL - NEWSWEEK) WAS FORCED BY GOI TO DISAFFILIATE HIMSELF FROM HIS MAGAZINE.

(D) PRAN SABHARWAL (BALTIMORE SUN) IS RUMORED ABOUT TO LOSE HIS GOI PRESS ACCREDITATION. IF IT IS WITHDRAWN, THE PAPER SAYS IT MUST CLOSE OPERATIONS HERE.

(E) THE RESIDENCE VISA OF LAWRENC LIFSCHULTZ (FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW; THE GUARDIAN) WAS NOT RENEWED (AND HE WAS THUS FORCED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY) FOR THE INDIAN EXPRESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AFFAIR DESCRIBING THE GOI'S ATTEMPTS TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE EXPRESS CHAIN OF NEWSPAPERS. (FRONT PAGE WASHINGTON POST, JANUARY 3, BY CHICAGO DAILY NEWS CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL CHINYOY.)

4. PRESENT RESTRICTIONS: JOURNALISTS WORK UNDER THE VARIOUS DRACONIAN POWERS ASSUMED BY THE GOI SINCE THE PROCLAMATION OF THE EMERGENCY JUNE 26. (THE RIGHT TO

BLANKET CENSORSHIP AUTHORITY ASSUMED BY THE GOI UNDER  
THE DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT IS NOW BEING CHALLENGED HERE  
IN THE COURTS.)

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS MUST SIGN AN UNDERTAKING  
THEY KNOW THAT UNDEFINED CENSORSHIP REGULATIONS ARE  
MISMANAGED, IMPLEMENTED HAPHAZARDLY. IN MANY INSTANCES  
JURISDICTION IS EXERCISED BY LOW LEVEL, POORLY EDUCATED  
CIVIL SERVANTS. THERE IS LITTLE UNIFORMITY IN THE  
APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY, IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OFFICIAL  
GUIDELINES, OR THE IMPOSITION OF PENALTIES. RULES ARE  
FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO PERMIT EXPULSION (AND THEORETICALLY  
JAILING) AT ANY TIME THE GOI CHOOSES NO LONGER TO TOLERATE  
THE WORK OF ANY JOURNALIST.

THIS WEEK THE GOI LIFTED PRE-CENSORSHIP ON NEWS CONCERNING  
THE CURRENT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT. AT THE SAME TIME IT  
ISSUED A HIGHLY RESTRICTIVE LIST OF "DO'S" AND "DON'TS".  
NEWSMEN NOW OPERATING ON THEIR OWN VIOLATION ARE BOUND TO  
BE EVEN MORE CAUTIOUS IN WHAT THEY REPORT. THE PRIME  
MINISTER MAY BE PLANNING TO RELAX CENSORSHIP RULES IN SOME  
FORMAL MANNER BUT THE INTENT OF THE GOVERNMENT WILL  
CONTINUE TO BE TO ENSURE A "DISCIPLINED" PRESS WHICH DOES  
NOT RAISE AGGRAVATING ISSUES. MOST OF THE PRESS AND  
EDITORS RECOGNIZE THEIR VULNERABILITY AND ARE PROBABLY  
PREPARED TO ACCOMMODATE TO THE GOI'S VIEWS EVEN IF CENSORSHIP  
IS RELAXED.

A REGULAR READER OF THE DAILY NEWSPAPERS HERE RECOGNIZES THE  
PRESS AS LITTLE MORE THAN A DAILY GOI BULLETIN. THE GOI  
PATTERN OF DEALING WITH CORRESPONDENTS GIVES THE IMPRESSION  
IT WOULD LIKE FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS TO FALL IN THIS SAME PAT-  
TERN. THE FUTURE OF PRESS FREEDOM HERE IS GRIM. WHATEVER DIS-  
SENT REMAINS IS BEING SYSTEMATICALLY SUPPRESSED. THE RECENT  
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COMMENT OF INDIAN AMBASSADOR T.N. KAUL TO THE WASHINGTON STAR  
PERHAPS BEST SUMS UP THE GOI ATTITUDE: ASKED WHY FREEDOM OF  
SPEECH, FREEDOM OF THE PRESS HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED, THE AMBASSADOR  
SAID THAT UNDER THE CONSTITUTION, WHENEVER AN EMERGENCY IS PRO-  
CLAIMED, "AUTOMATICALLY SOME OF THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS ARE  
TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED WHEN PARLIAMENT RATIFIED THAT PROCLAMA-  
TION."  
GILMORE

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\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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